



# Land-Use Annual Report 2006



**Prepared By**  
St. Louis County Planning Department

## About the Report

The report provides an overview of residential and commercial land-use activity by areas that are administered by St. Louis County. The report highlights permit type, variances, conditional-use permits, plats, rezonings, land-use plans, and others related to both lakeshore and non-lakeshore areas.

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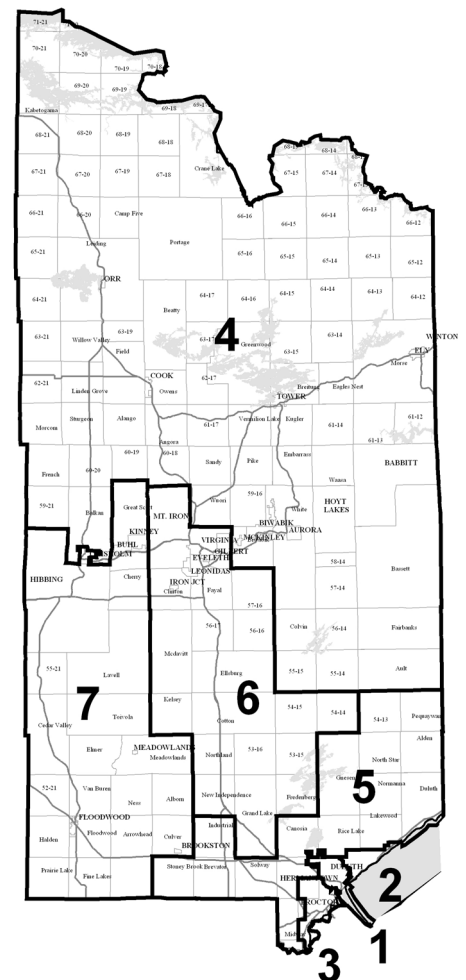
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>MESSAGE FROM THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>LAND-USE ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Physical Planning Division &amp; Duties</i>	6
<i>St. Louis County Zoning Ordinance</i>	6
<i>Ordinances, Statutes, and Plans</i>	7
<i>Administration of Zoning</i>	7
<i>Comprehensive Land-Use Plans</i>	8
<i>Comprehensive Plan Administration</i>	9
<b>PERMIT SUMMARY</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>About Land-Use Permits</i>	10
<i>Total Permits 1997-2006 &amp; by Type</i>	10
<i>Dot Maps: Permit Activity</i>	11
<i>Permits by Month</i>	12
<i>Permit by Type 1997-2006</i>	13
<i>Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore Permits</i>	14
<i>Permit Activity by Top Lakes</i>	15
<b>BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT (BOA)</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>Duties of the Board of Adjustment</i>	16
<i>Board of Adjustment Members</i>	16
<i>Why Variances</i>	17
<i>Total Variance Applications</i>	17
<i>Total Variance Applications by Month &amp; by Lakeshore</i>	18
<i>Variance Requests by Type</i>	19
<b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>Duties of the Planning Commission</i>	20
<i>Planning Commission Members</i>	20
<i>Planning Commission Applications</i>	21
<i>Applications by Type</i>	22
<i>Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore</i>	23
<i>Plats &amp; Subdivisions</i>	24
<i>Applications Referred to County Board</i>	25
<b>PERMIT FEES</b>	<b>26</b>





## A Message From the Planning Department

**T**hank you for investing in St. Louis County and making it your place to live, work, play, and relax.

It is the goal of the Planning Department to serve the public in the highest level of service and professionalism. Our role is to conduct land-use permitting, assist communities in long-range planning efforts, maintain zoning regulations, improve communities infrastructure, and attain other county goals.

St. Louis County is the largest county jurisdiction east of the Mississippi River, with over 6,860 square miles of scattered cities, lakes, resorts, and wilderness. The county has over 1,000 lakes, over 100 jurisdictions, thousands of miles of trails, and hundreds of parks that provide recreational opportunities to both residents and tourists. Its natural beauty is reflected by the fact that it is one of the top counties in the nation with almost 10 percent of the residential housing stock as seasonal and recreational property.

With this diversity and the daily expansion of technology, the Planning Department is continually improving communication efforts and streamlining the permitting process to assist property owners in getting projects started in a timely manner once permits are submitted. We strive to be accessible, provide quick and relevant information, and assist residents to the highest level of satisfaction possible through a one-stop efficiency.

In order to help residents further improve or develop both residential and commercial property, the Planning Department has developed a series of print and web publications and applications to help guide project planning.

These **print and web publications and applications** can be accessed through the Planning Department's website, by calling us for assistance, or visiting one of our offices.

Sincerely,

Barbara Hayden  
St. Louis County Planning Director

County Web-Site  
[www.co.st-louis.mn.us](http://www.co.st-louis.mn.us)  
Email Questions to:  
[planninginfo@co.st-louis.mn.us](mailto:planninginfo@co.st-louis.mn.us)

# Land-Use Administration

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

## The Physical Planning Division

The St. Louis County Planning Department's Physical Planning Division has two main functions:

1. Administration and enforcement of land-use zoning regulations and associated permitting requirements;
2. Working with other county departments and jurisdictions to conduct planning studies and analyses.

The goal of the Physical Planning Division is to streamline regulatory activities to be more "customer friendly" without sacrificing land-use integrity. The Planning Department has offices in Duluth and Virginia.

## Duties of Division

- Review development proposals
- Review, approve and enforce zoning
- Make recommendations to the County Board on land use plans, rezonings, and amendments to ordinances
- Review subdivision plats
- Issue land-use permits
- Conduct environmental review
- Assist with county water planning
- Provide staff to Planning Commission (PC) and Board of Adjustment (BOA)
- Guide land-use planning process
- Coordinate inter-agency/inter-jurisdictional planning activity
- Administer wetland and shoreland regulations

## St. Louis County's Zoning Ordinance

The St. Louis County Zoning Ordinance establishes a comprehensive land-use regulation for that portion of St. Louis County outside the incorporated limits of municipalities to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the inhabitants.

The county is divided into land-use zones. In each zone there are regulations for permitted uses of land and the



placement of all structures. The ordinance is intended to encourage the most appropriate use of land in the county, and to recognize and preserve the economic and environmental values of all lands within the county.

Land-use ordinances and regulations were written and approved by residents as a "tool" to protect and manage existing and future resources and communities.

Land-use regulations strive to balance the protection of natural resources, provide opportunities for economic growth, guard private property owner rights, and ultimately encourage the most appropriate use of the land.

With the county's vast size also comes varying and overlapping laws and ordinances to regulate the use of land that the county must adhere to.

## Ordinances, Statutes, Plans Enforced by St. Louis County Planning Department

St. Louis County	Adopted	Amended
Zoning Ordinance #46	February 16, 1993	August 16, 1993 March 23, 1998 November 1, 2000 July 1, 2003
Comprehensive Land-Use Plan Ordinance #27	December 27, 1977	
Subdivision Regulations Ordinance #33	July 13, 1993	
Floodplain Management Ordinance #43	February 19, 1992	
Comprehensive Wetland Protection and Management Plan	March 9, 1999	

# Land-Use Administration

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Ordinances, Statutes, and Plans

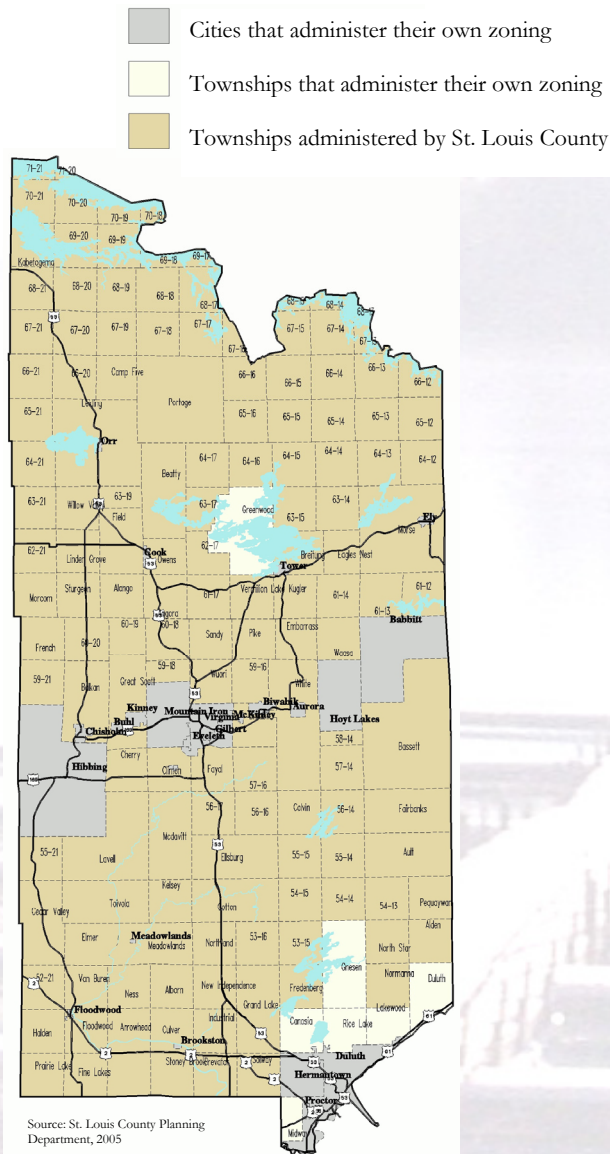
The St. Louis County Planning Department Physical Planning Division administers state, federal and local regulations pertaining to land-use. Below are some examples of ordinances and statutes the Planning Department administers.

## Administration of Zoning

The St. Louis County Planning Department administers zoning regulations in areas designated below.

There are various cities and townships across St. Louis County that administer their own zoning. Mainly these areas are urban in nature, whereas the county administers many rural areas and shoreland areas.

## Administration of Zoning St. Louis County 2006



### Cities and Townships That Administer Their Own Zoning

Cities	Phone	Web Site
Aurora	(218) 749-2912	<a href="http://www.ci.aurora.mn.us">www.ci.aurora.mn.us</a>
Babbitt	(218) 827-2188	<a href="http://www.babbitt-mn.com">www.babbitt-mn.com</a>
Biwabik	(218) 865-4183	<a href="http://www.cityofbiwabik.com">www.cityofbiwabik.com</a>
Brookston	(218) 453-5541	na
Buhl	(218) 258-3226	na
Chisholm	(218) 254-7900	na
Cook	(218) 666-2200	na
Duluth	(218) 723-3305	<a href="http://www.ci.duluth.mn.us">www.ci.duluth.mn.us</a>
Ely	(218) 365-3224	na
Eveleth	(218) 744-2501	<a href="http://www.evelethmn.com">www.evelethmn.com</a>
Floodwood	(218) 476-2751	<a href="http://www.floodwood.govoffice.com">www.floodwood.govoffice.com</a>
Gilbert	(218) 748-2232	<a href="http://www.gilbertmn.org">www.gilbertmn.org</a>
Hermantown	(218) 729-3600	<a href="http://www.hermantownmn.com">www.hermantownmn.com</a>
Hibbing	(218) 262-3486	<a href="http://www.hibbing.mn.us">www.hibbing.mn.us</a>
Hoyt Lakes	(218) 225-2344	<a href="http://www.hoytlakes.com">www.hoytlakes.com</a>
Iron Junction	(218) 744-4389	na
Kinney	(218) 258-3836	na
McKinley	(218) 749-5313	na
Meadowlands	(218) 427-2565	na
Mountain Iron	(218) 735-8446	<a href="http://www.mtniron.com">www.mtniron.com</a>
Orr	(218) 757-3288	<a href="http://www.orrnm.com">www.orrnm.com</a>
Proctor	(218) 624-4055	na
Tower	(218) 753-4070	na
Virginia	(218) 748-7500	<a href="http://www.virginiamn.us">www.virginiamn.us</a>
Winton	(218) 365-5941	na
Townships		
Canosia	(218) 729-7357	<a href="http://www.cpinternet.com/~canosia/">www.cpinternet.com/~canosia/</a>
Duluth Twp.	(218) 728-4293	<a href="http://www.duluthtownship.org">www.duluthtownship.org</a>
Gnesen	(218) 721-4796	na
Greenwood	(218) 290-1132	na
Lakewood	(218) 525-2245	na
Midway	(218) 726-2479	na
Rice Lake	(218) 721-5001	na
All Other Areas		
St. Louis County	(218) 725-5000	<a href="http://www.co.st-louis.mn.us">www.co.st-louis.mn.us</a>



# Land-Use Administration

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

The St. Louis County Planning Department administers zoning regulations in townships and unorganized areas throughout the county.

## ■ What is a Comprehensive Land-Use Plan

The County and townships across St. Louis County have developed and updated comprehensive land-use plans for their particular areas through a broad consensus building process whereby citizens and stakeholders form a vision for how land will be utilized and developed.

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a coordinated set of guidelines for decision-making to guide the future growth and development of an area. Once this set of guidelines and policies are set, a zoning map is developed and maintained by St. Louis County.

Comprehensive plans can address many areas of concern by residents such as: land-uses, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces, agriculture, timber production, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses to accommodate future growth.

In addition, provisions must be made for the protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies, and the plan must address surface water (i.e., drainage, flooding, and storm water run-off).

## ■ Who Develops Comprehensive Land-Use Plans

Townships generally initiate comprehensive land-use plans, with citizen involvement being the centerpiece of any planning effort.

Land-use plans are the compilation of community ideas by all stakeholders that have evolved over several years of discussion, thought, input, debate, examination and study.

The final plan reflects a community consensus of land uses and is implemented through zoning ordinances.





# Land-Use Administration

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

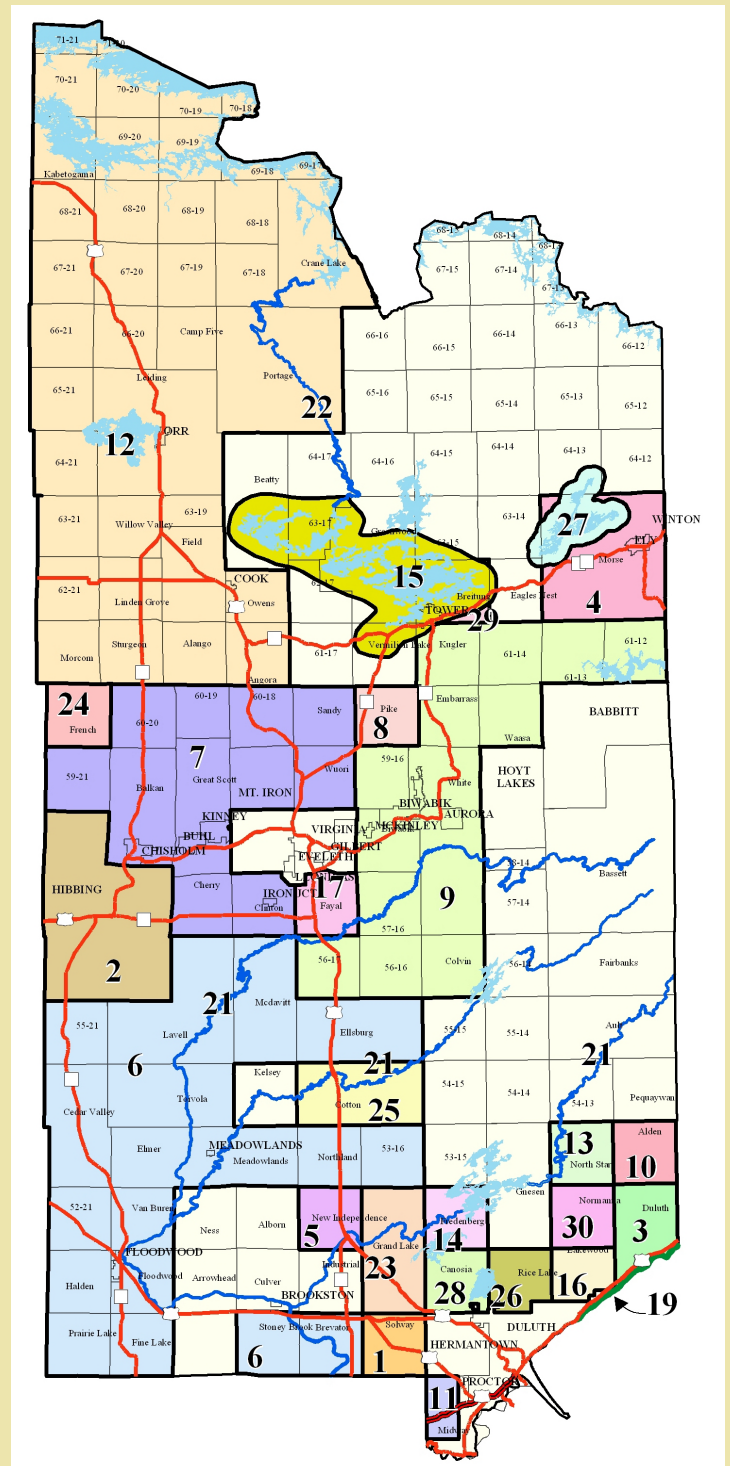
Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Comprehensive Plans St. Louis County 2006

### Land Use Plans and Their Effective Dates

Section 1	Town of Solway January 6, 1978 March 13, 2001	Section 15	Lake Vermilion Land Use Plan March 25, 1985
Section 2	Town of Stuntz June 12, 1978	Section 16	Town of Lakewood October 22, 1985
Section 3	Town of Duluth January 29, 1979	Section 17	Town of Fayal December 2, 1985 September, 2002
Section 4	Town of Morse February 1, 1979	Section 18	Houseboat Goals and Policies May 26, 1987
Section 5	Town of New Independence April 1, 1979	Section 19	North Shore Management Plan April 24, 1990
Section 6	Southwest Planning Area September 1, 1980	Section 20	St. Louis County Water Plan July 1, 2001
Section 7	West Range Planning Area October 6, 1980	Section 21	St. Louis, Cloquet, Whiteface Corridor Management Plan April 5, 1994
Section 8	Town of Pike September 14, 1981	Section 22	Vermilion River Plan August 15, 1995
Section 9	East Range Plan October 26, 1981	Section 23	Grand Lake Plan May 9, 2000
Section 10	Town of Alden March 22, 1982	Section 24	French Plan May 23, 2000
Section 11	Town of Midway April 12, 1982	Section 25	Cotton Plan April 10, 2001
Section 12	Voyageur Planning Area July 1, 1982	Section 26	Rice Lake Plan November 20, 2001
Section 13	Town of Normanna March 14, 1983	Section 27	Burntside Lake Land Use Plan September 1, 2001
Section 14	Town of Fredenberg December 10, 1984	Section 28	Canosia Land Use Plan March 1, 2003
		Section 29	Breitung Land Use Plan March 15, 2003



# Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

**Permit Summary**

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

## About Land-Use Permits

The St. Louis County Planning Department regulates land-use to encourage the most appropriate use of property while preserving economic and environmental value. To accomplish this task, the Planning Department requires land-use permits for:

- Homes/cabins, additions, accessory buildings (garages, sheds, gazebos, screenhouses, saunas, boathouses, and storage buildings), borrow pits, commercial uses, decks, industrial uses, change in use, land alterations to shoreland, home-based businesses, junk/salvage yards, mobile homes, replacing of one structure with another, remodeling, signs, bunkhouses and other special situations.

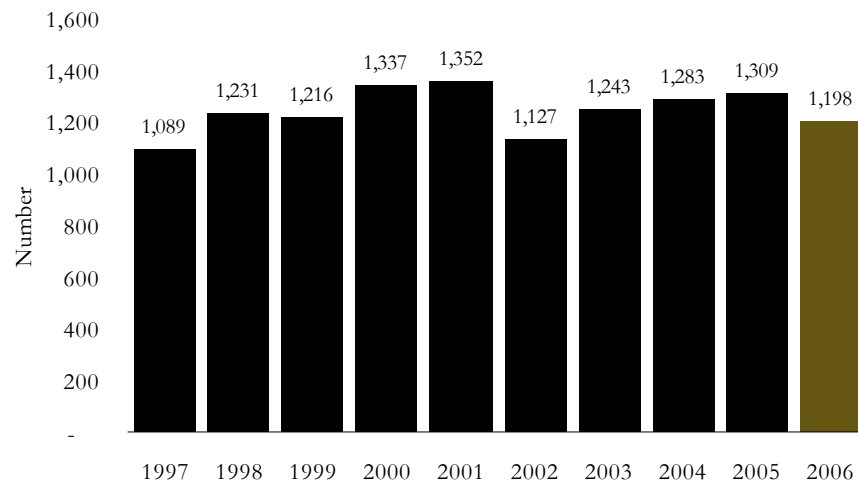
## Total Permit Activity

In 2006, there were a total of 1,198 approved land-use permits, variances applications (Planning Department only), and Planning Commission applications.

Land-use permit activity increased 12.7% from 932 in 1997 to 1,051 in 2006. Variance applications (Planning Department only) decreased 1.4% from 99 in 1997 to 98 in 2006. Planning Commission applications decreased 15.51% from 58 in 1997 to 49 in 2006.

### Total Permit Activity 1997-2006

Approved Land-Use Permits, Variances, & Planning Commission Applications



### Land-Use Permit by Type 2006

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
										#	% Change '97-'06
Land-Use Permits <sup>1</sup>	932	1,114	1,071	1,161	1,185	945	1,080	1,123	1,132	1,051	12.7%
Variances (Planning Dept. only)	99	81	91	134	101	127	108	104	109	98	-1.4%
Planning Commission Applications <sup>2</sup>	58	36	54	42	66	55	55	56	68	49	-15.51%
<b>Total All Permits</b>	<b>1,089</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>1,337</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>1,243</b>	<b>1,283</b>	<b>1,309</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>10.00%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006.

<sup>2</sup>This excludes variance and Planning Commission cases, land-use permit applications denied, pending, voided, and withdrawn.

<sup>3</sup>This includes conditional-use permits, rezonings, plats/subdivisions, land-use/water plans, ordinance amendments, environmental reviews, and others.



# Permit Summary

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

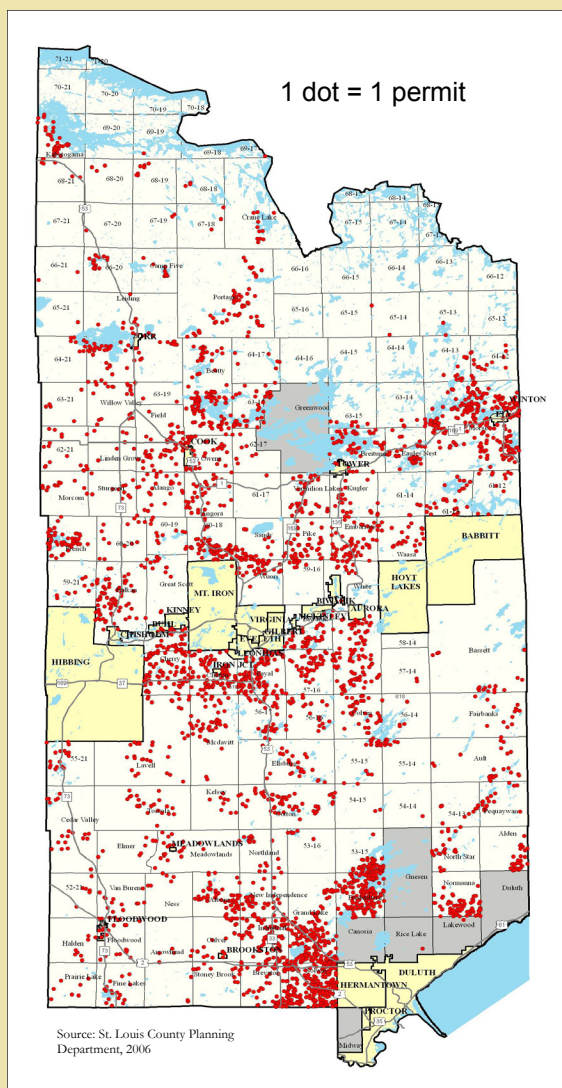
## Permit Activity: Dot Maps

The following maps show permit activity by location across St. Louis County and are intended to portray potential trends and hot spots. One dot equals one permit.

The data will include all the permit activity within the jurisdictions of St. Louis County and excludes any township that administers its own zoning.

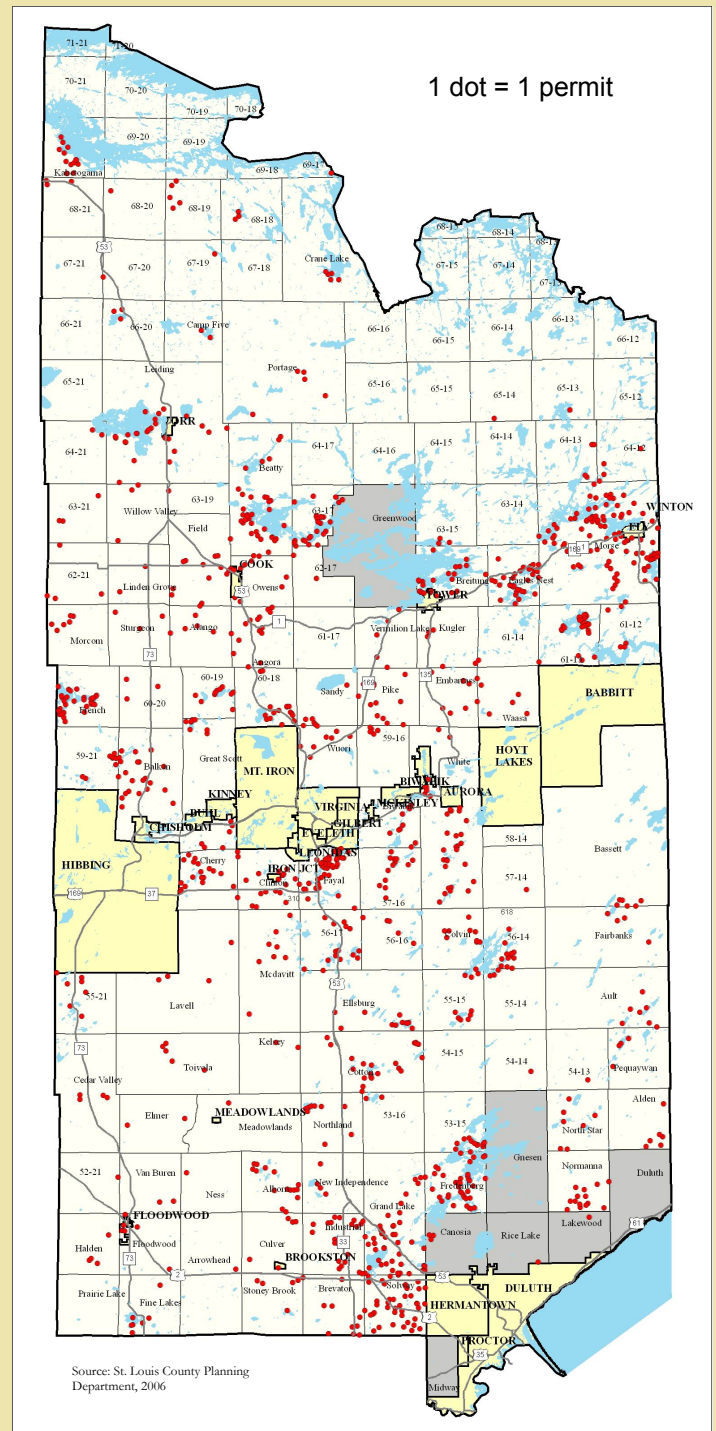
Both maps show higher levels of permit activity in the lake regions and rural areas of the county. The rural areas include townships and cities that are considered suburb areas of Duluth.

## 2002-2006 Land-Use Permit Activity



## 2006 Land-Use Permit Activity

All Participating Communities in Permit System



Note: Data extracted from the Minnesota Counties Information System (MCIS) and participating cities,

# Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

## ■ Permits by Month

Land-use permit applications were received throughout 2006. As road restrictions are removed in the spring there is a large increase in permit applications. This generally marks the beginning of the construction season.

Historically, the peak of the land-use permit season is in August, while the low is in February. In 2006, this trend continues with the peak number of applications reviewed and approved in August, while January experienced the lowest activity.

## ■ Land-Use Permits by Type

In 2006, the largest amount of land-use approved permits by category were accessory buildings with 468 permits, followed by single-family dwellings with 312 permits, and dwelling additions with 151 permits.

In 2006, the greatest number of approved permits by type

were for 258 permits for single-family dwellings with over 600 square feet, 245 permits for accessory building structures over 800 square feet, and 192 permits for accessory building structures between 100-800 square feet.

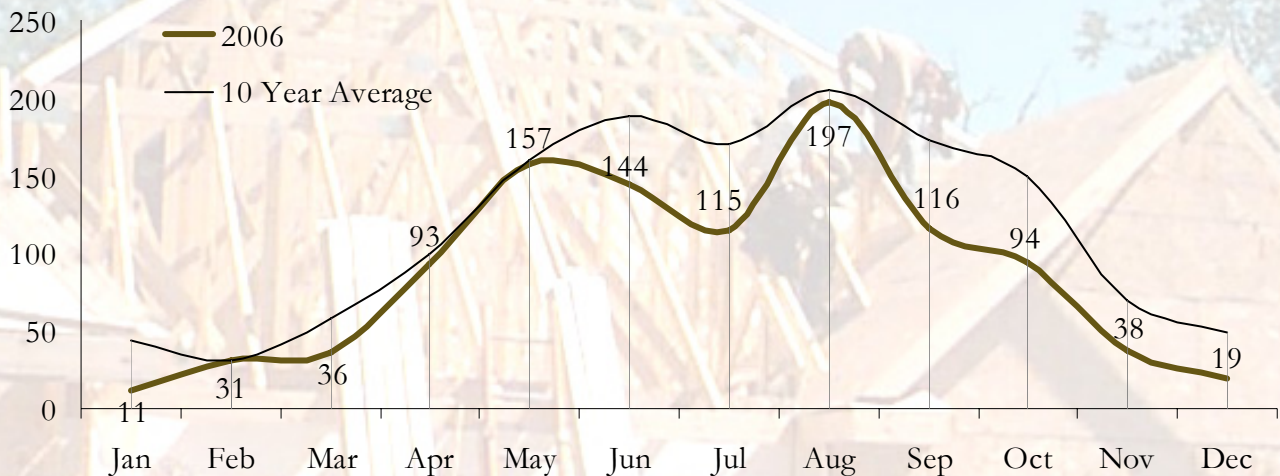
Accessory buildings accounted for approximately 39% of all approved permits in 2006. New construction of single-family dwellings and the establishment of mobile homes accounted for approximately 26% of all approved permits. Dwelling additions accounted for approximately 12.6% of all approved permits. New commercial buildings, additions, and accessory additions accounted for 1% of approved permits.

In 2006, variances accounted for approximately 7.8% of all permit activity, while Planning Commission applications accounted for approximately 5% of all permit activity.

The adjacent chart is a further breakdown of approved land-use permits within the St. Louis County Planning Department's jurisdiction.

## Total Approved Permits by Month

1997-2006 (Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006



# Permit Summary

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Land-Use Permits by Type

Total Number 1997-2006

Type	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
										#	% of Total
General Land-Use Permits											
Single Family Dwelling (0-600 sq ft)	49	48	43	48	58	42	41	35	32	29	2.4%
Single Family Dwelling (>600 sq ft)	240	304	291	318	268	217	294	343	289	258	21.5%
Mobile Home	na <sup>1</sup>	na <sup>1</sup>	na <sup>1</sup>	na <sup>1</sup>	27	12	14	14	16	25	2.1%
Subtotal	289	352	334	366	353	271	349	409	337	312	26.0%
Dwelling Addition	136	194	157	184	119	113	113	114	139	151	12.6%
Subtotal	136	194	157	184	119	113	113	114	139	151	12.6%
Accessory Building (100-800 sq ft)	202	230	250	235	198	155	219	189	203	192	16.0%
Accessory Building (>800 sq ft)	229	248	242	265	269	219	291	283	283	245	20.4%
Accessory Building Addition	14	19	23	19	37	21	24	31	33	31	2.6%
Subtotal	445	497	515	519	504	395	534	503	519	468	39.0%
Commercial Building	6	4	7	6	9	13	5	8	4	3	0.2%
Commercial Building Addition	12	11	16	10	10	5	3	2	3	3	0.2%
Commercial Accessory Building	na <sup>4</sup>	na <sup>4</sup>	na <sup>4</sup>	na <sup>4</sup>	10	4	3	7	1	8	0.6%
Subtotal	18	15	23	16	29	22	11	17	8	14	1%
Deck	34	45	40	32	34	29	28	37	48	32	2.7%
Sauna	-	-	-	-	12	18	14	17	34	15	1.2%
Screened Porch	-	-	-	-	20	21	8	6	13	-	0%
Home Occupation	-	-	-	-	6	3	7	9	4	4	0.3%
Structure Moving/Storage	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	3	5	2	0.2%
Other (Performance standards, off-site signs, fee-waived, etc.)	10	11	2	44	106	71	14	8	25	53	4.4%
General Land-Use Permit Subtotal	932 <sup>5</sup>	1,114 <sup>5</sup>	1,071 <sup>5</sup>	1,161	1,185	945	1,080	1,123	1,132	1,051	87.5%
Variance Applications											
Variances (Planning Department Only)	99	81	91	134	101	127	108	104	109	98	7.8%
Planning Commission Applications											
Planning Commission Applications	58	36	54	42	66	55	55	56	68	49	5.0%
Conditional Use Permits (CUP)	40	27	43	29	41	36	27	33	38	26	4.2%
Plats/Subdivisions	4	3	5	3	11	6	17	15	17	13	1.1%
Rezoning	7	2	5	4	6	3	8	5	6	6	0.6%
Land Use/Water Plans	0	2	0	2	5	3	2	2	1	1	0%
Ordinance	2	1	1	2	2	5	1	0	0	0	0%
Environmental Assessment Worksheet	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	2	0.08%
Other	5	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	3	1	0.5%
TOTAL ALL PERMITS	1,089	1,231	1,216	1,337	1,352	1,127	1,243	1,283	1,309	1,198	100.0%

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

<sup>1</sup> From 1997-2000 included in single family dwelling by size <sup>4</sup> From 1997-2000 data included in commercial building additions <sup>5</sup> Data inconsistencies from 1997-1999 due to data systems

# Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

**Permit Summary**

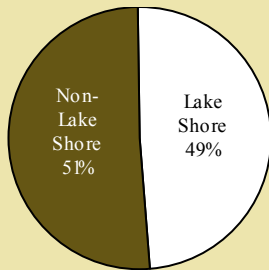
Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

## Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore Permits

St. Louis County 2006

(Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



Of the total approved permits in 2006, 49% were lakeshore related and 51% were non-lakeshore.

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

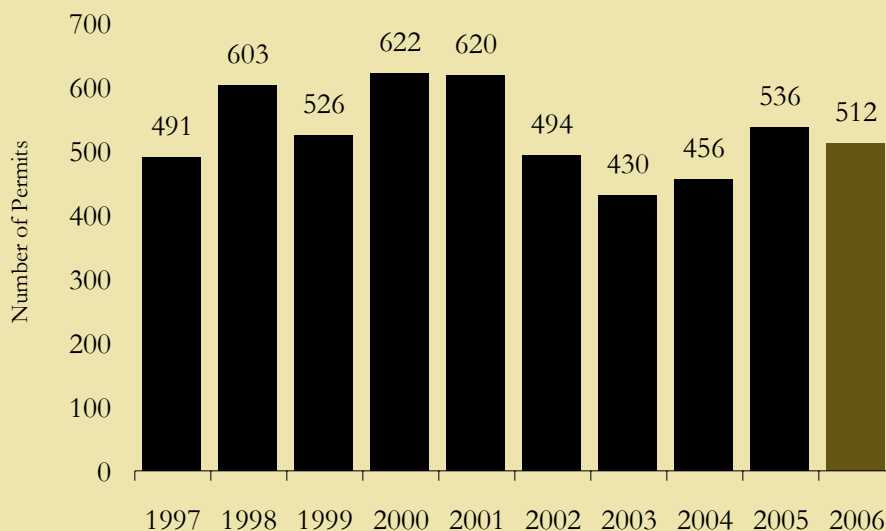


## All Permit Activity by Class By Percent (%) Lakeshore vs. Non-Lakeshore

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006		
										Number	Percent (%)	Percent (%) Change '97-'06
Non-Lakeshore Permits	55%	51%	57%	54%	54%	56%	60%	60%	596	539	51%	-4%
Lakeshore Permits	45%	49%	43%	46%	46%	44%	40%	40%	536	512	49%	+4%

## Total Lakeshore Approved Permits

1997-2006 (Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)



In 2006, there were 512 approved lakeshore permits. From 1997-2005, St. Louis County averaged 5 approved lakeshore permits per year in county administered areas.

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

# Permit Summary

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

**Permit Summary**

Land-Use Administration



## Development Activity by Lake

### Approved Permits 1997- 2006

(Excludes Variances and Planning Commission Applications)

Lake	Lake #	# of Permits										Total 1997-2006
		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
1. Vermilion	690378	60	41	64	93	72	64	71	87	79	65	696
2. Island Lake Reservoir	690372	28	48	56	52	37	39	31	25	37	23	376
3. Burntside	690118	16	19	20	40	24	27	12	15	20	26	219
4. Whiteface Reservoir	690375	16	19	10	11	10	13	18	24	22	22	165
5. Tributaries	692008	17	11	9	10	11	22	14	0	19	23	136
7. Pelican	690841	13	22	7	13	12	12	8	7	10	14	118
6. Kabetogama	690845	12	9	15	17	10	21	2	17	8	6	117
9. Bear Island	690115	4	6	12	14	18	13	13	10	9	18	117
8. Fish Lake Flowage	690491	8	12	20	10	11	5	12	12	11	9	110
10. Ely	690660	1	11	10	15	14	11	7	9	9	20	107
11. Birch	690003	9	13	9	17	10	6	4	6	6	3	83

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

Lake Vermilion had the most permit activity in 2006 with 65 approved permits, and the most permit activity from 1997-2006 with 696 approved permits. Burntside Lake had the second most permit activity in 2006 with 26 approved permits, and from 1998-2006 Island Lake Reservoir had the second most permit activity with 376 approved permits.

The remaining lake permit activity in 2006 was Whiteface Reservoir (22), Island Lake Reservoir (23), Tributaries (23), Fish Lake Flowage (9) Pelican (14) Bear Island (18), Ely (20) Kabetogama (6) and Birch (3).



# Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

**Board of Adjustment (BOA)**

Planning Commission

## Board of Adjustment (BOA) Duties

Duties of the St. Louis County Board of Adjustment (BOA) are:

1. To hear and decide requests for variances from the county's official controls; and
2. To hear and decide appeals of administrative decisions relating to county official controls.

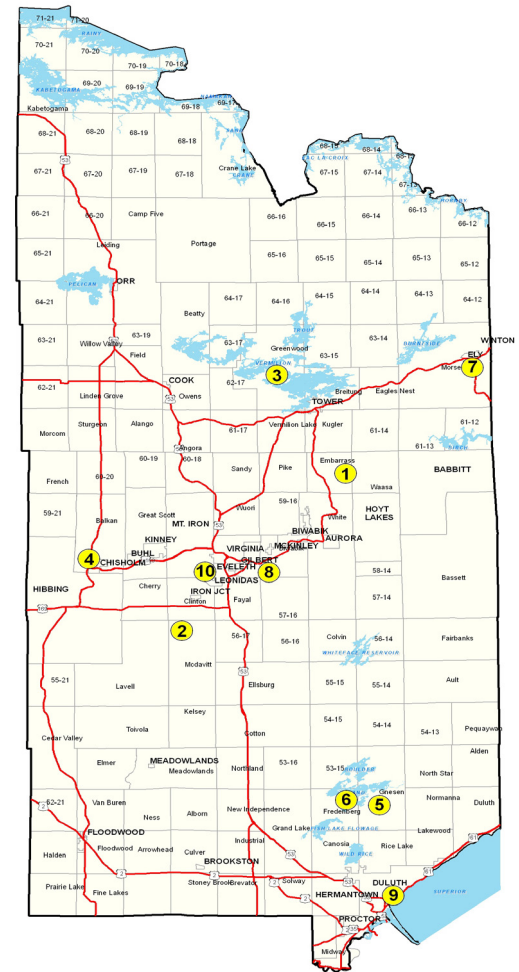
It is impossible to develop official controls managing the physical development of land in sufficient detail to govern all circumstances. Variances from official controls are necessary to provide flexibility in the regulatory process when strict enforcement of official controls would be unreasonable and unfair.

The BOA is responsible for providing this flexibility. However, the BOA should not undermine the standards and objectives of the comprehensive plan and all official controls enacted by the county to further the purpose and objectives of its comprehensive plan. The BOA acts as the safety valve of the county in relieving citizens of unfair application of official controls. At the same time, the BOA acts as a guardian of the purpose and objectives of the comprehensive plan and official controls.

## Board of Adjustment (BOA) 2006 Members

- |    |                     |
|----|---------------------|
| 1. | Marilyn Mueller     |
| 2. | Julia Maki          |
| 3. | Darlene Majkich     |
| 4. | George Rogich       |
| 5. | Tom Coombe          |
| 6. | Stanley Hendrickson |
| 7. | Lee Prinkkila       |

## Board of Adjustment (BOA) 2006 Member Locations





# Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Planning Commission

**Board of Adjustment (BOA)**

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Reasons for Variances

In the past several years, there has been an increase in development pressures on land-use on and near St. Louis County lakes and streams. This has caused an increase in the number of variances requested from the BOA. Below are common reasons for variances:

- Geographic hardship or practical difficulty
- Physical size limitations— wetlands, rock outcrops, steep slopes
- Original development occurred prior to the enactment of land-use regulations
- Conversion from seasonal to year round use
- More intensive use often triggers the need for septic updates
- As new regulations are enacted, nonconformities may be created
- Resource protection was not a priority for the original property platters, resulting in small lots

## Definitions

### Variance

Variance means a modification or variation of official controls.

### Official Controls

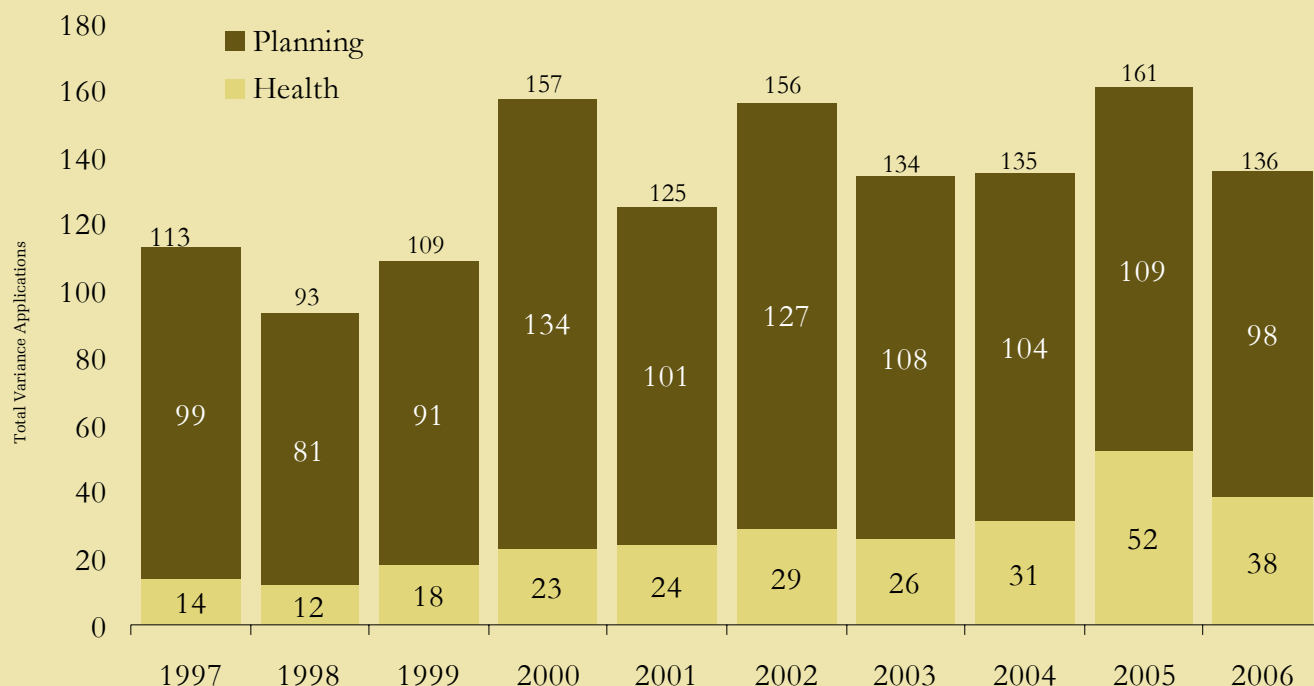
Official controls are legislatively defined and enacted policies, standards, and other criteria, all of which control the physical development of a municipality or a county. County official controls typically include zoning ordinances, subdivision controls, and sanitary ordinances.

## Total Variance Applications

The Board of Adjustment (BOA) reviewed a total of 136 variance cases in 2006. The Planning Department presented 98 variance cases and the Health Department presented 38 variance cases.

From 1997-2006, the BOA reviewed an average of 131.9 variance cases per year. Over the same period, the Planning Department presented an average of 105.2 cases per year, and the Health Department presented an average of 26.7 cases per year to the BOA.

## Total Variance Applications Planning and Health



Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

# Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

**Board of Adjustment (BOA)**

Planning Commission

## ■ Lakeshore Variances

A majority of variance applications are related to the development of lakeshore property. In 2006, approximately 96%, or 153 applications, were for variances related to lake property.

## ■ Variance Applications by Month

In 2006, the season for variance applications began earlier, peaked in May and declined later in the year. Historically, variance applications experience a relatively stable case load (except winter) over the year with late fall experiencing an increase.

## ■ Variance Requests by Type

The adjacent chart displays the variance requests by type. Each variance application can have multiple requests for relief from ordinance requirements.

In 2006, there were a total of 136 variance requests for relief from ordinance requirements. The highest number of variance requests were for principal structures relating to lot width/area and shoreline setback.

Overall, shoreline setback relief variance requests were the largest request for all principal and accessory structures, with oversized additions and sewage system variances in the northern part of the county also ranking fairly high.

## Lakeshore Variance Applications 2006

Planning and Health



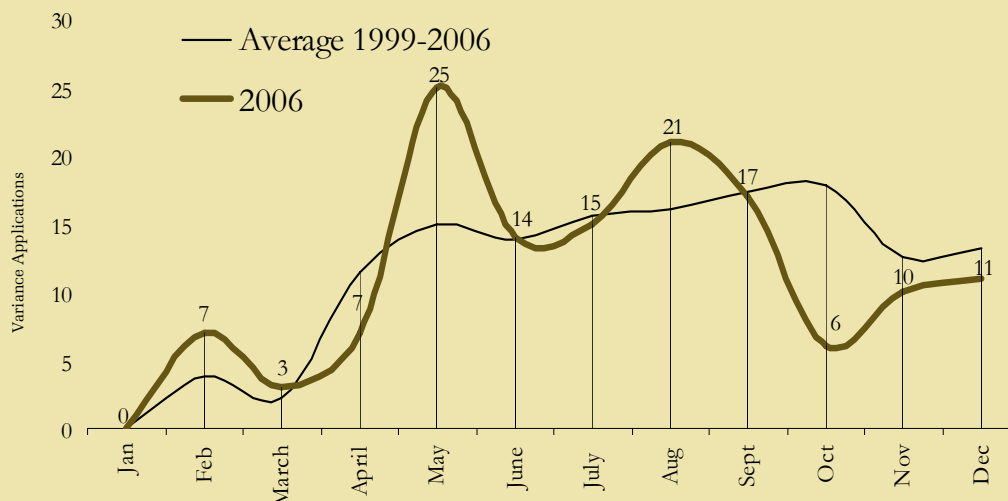
## Lakeshore Variance Applications

Planning and Health Department Totals by Percent (%)

	Number				Percent (%) of Total
	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Lakeshore	120	119	153	128	94%
Non-Lakeshore	14	16	7	8	6%
Total Requests	134	135	160	136	100%

## Variance Applications by Month

Planning and Health  
1999-2006



Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

# Board of Adjustment (BOA) Summary

Planning Commission

**Board of Adjustment (BOA)**

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Variance Requests by Type

St. Louis County Planning Department

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Increase or Decrease in Variances 2000-2006
<b>Principal Structures</b>								
Shoreline Setback	28	23	25	18	27	16	23	↓
Lot Width and/or Area	21	18	11	23	20	19	23	↑
40% of Lot Width <sup>2</sup>	3	6	10	8	7	10	4	↑
Side Yard Setback	1	3	7	6	4	11	10	↑
Second Principal Structure	6	3	4	6	4	0	3	↓
Height Limit	4	1	3	3	5	5	7	↑
Road Setback	3	4	2	10	9	4	4	↑
Rear Yard	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	
Bluff	1	0	1	3	1	1	0	↓
% Lot Coverage	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	↓
Sub Total	68	59	64	80	77	66	74	↑
<b>Primary Additions</b>								
Shoreline Setback	11	7	38	8	7	13	8	↓
Allowable Size Exceeded	23	22	35	14	11	17	16	↓
Height Limit	0	0	14	8	6	10	2	↑
Side Yard Setback	1	1	12	7	1	5	5	↑
One Addition Allowed	2	0	10	1	3	5	3	↑
40% of Lot Width <sup>2</sup>	0	0	9	3	2	6	2	↑
Foundation from Lake	1	0	7	1	0	5	0	↓
Road Setback	3	0	6	2	3	3	5	↑
Sub Total	41	30	131	44	33	64	41	
<b>Accessory Structure</b>								
Shoreline Setback	12	9	13	16	5	16	3	↓
Road Setback	13	14	10	12	3	9	7	↓
Size Limit	5	2	9	6	7	10	5	
Side Yard Setback	14	4	5	11	6	10	3	↓
Rear Lot Line	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	
Second Water Oriented Structure	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	
Sub Total	44	29	39	47	22	47	18	↓
<b>Other</b>								
Septic	23	24	29	26	26	60	30	↑
Subdivision Platting	5	1	3	7	2	5	2	↓
Side Lot Line (Accessory Additions)	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	↓
Boathouse Size Exceeded	5	3	0	2	1	0	2	↓
Exceeding % of Impervious Surface	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	↓
Appeal of PC Decision	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	↓
Sub Total	35	31	33	37	29	66	34	↓
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>188</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>↓</b>

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

<sup>1</sup> Indicates the total number of variance requests. An applicant could have several requests per application.

<sup>2</sup> 40% lot width means that the width of the home or cabin facing the water can not exceed 40% of the lot's total width.

# Planning Commission Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

**Planning Commission**

## ■ Planning Commission Duties

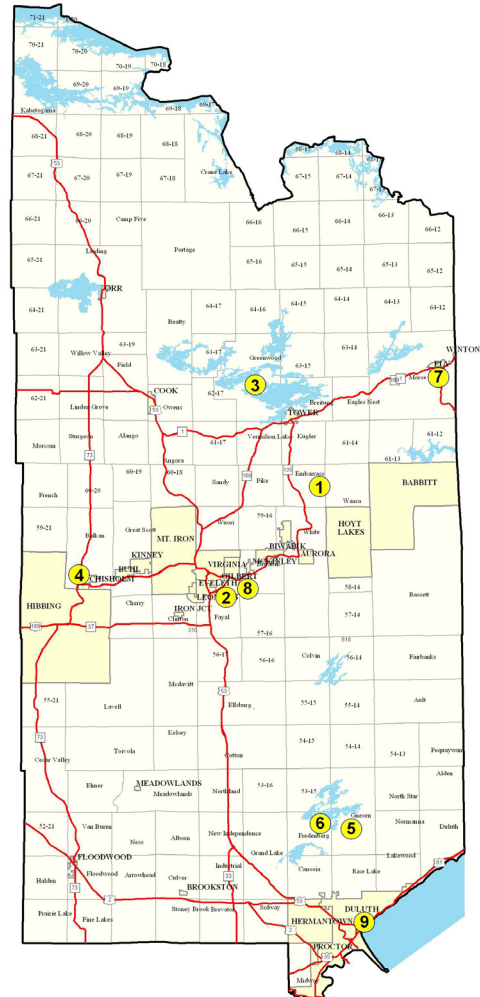
The duties of the St. Louis County Planning Commission are:

1. To prepare and recommend to the St. Louis County Board of Commissioners a county comprehensive plan and official controls necessary to aid in the plan's execution.
2. To review any comprehensive, land use, or other plans or official controls sent to the county for review by any local unit of government, council of governments, or any regional, state, or federal agency, and to make a report to the County Board.
3. To hold all required public hearings for comprehensive plans, official controls, conditional use permit applications, subdivision platting proposals, amendments to the same, and other matters as may be prescribed by county ordinance.
4. To review and act upon (i.e., hold a hearing and make the final declaration) all environmental review petitions, worksheets and impact statements that involve conditional uses, subdivision plats or other development proposals.

### Planning Commission 2006 Members

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 1. | Julia Ann Maki   |
| 2. | Tom Coombe       |
| 3. | Paula Bloczynski |
| 4. | Don Nienas       |
| 5. | Gunnar Johnson   |
| 6. | Ron Envall       |
| 7. | Barb Berglund    |
| 8. | Jack Huhta       |
| 9. | Dennis Fink      |

## Planning Commission Members 2006 Member locations





# Planning Commission Summary

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

Land-Use Administration

## Overview

The Planning Commission reviews conditional-use permits, subdivision plats, rezonings, and land-use plans. These types of applications and proposals have the potential of affecting neighbors, the community and the county.

Members of the public, as well as local, county, state and federal organizations, comment on issues of concern. Common areas discussed during the public hearings include: environmental limitations of a site such as wetlands and the ability of property to support sewage treatment; capacity of roads to handle increased development; location of buildings on a property; hours and days of operation; and controlling waste, dust and noise from an operation.

### Conditional-Use Permits

A conditional-use is defined in the county zoning ordinance as a land-use or development that would not generally be appropriate without certain restrictions placed upon the use and a review to determine if it is compatible with the county land-use plan.

Examples of conditional-use cases reviewed by the Planning Commission include: campgrounds, gravel pits, resort expansions, mini storage operations, and certain types of home based businesses.

All conditional-use applications require a public hearing and an inspection by county staff. Property owners in the area of the

proposed development receive notice of the public hearing along with the town government.

The Planning Commission, after the close of the public hearing, will make a decision on the proposal. This decision may be to turn down the application, or it may involve approving the application with conditions.

## 2006 Total Applications & Type

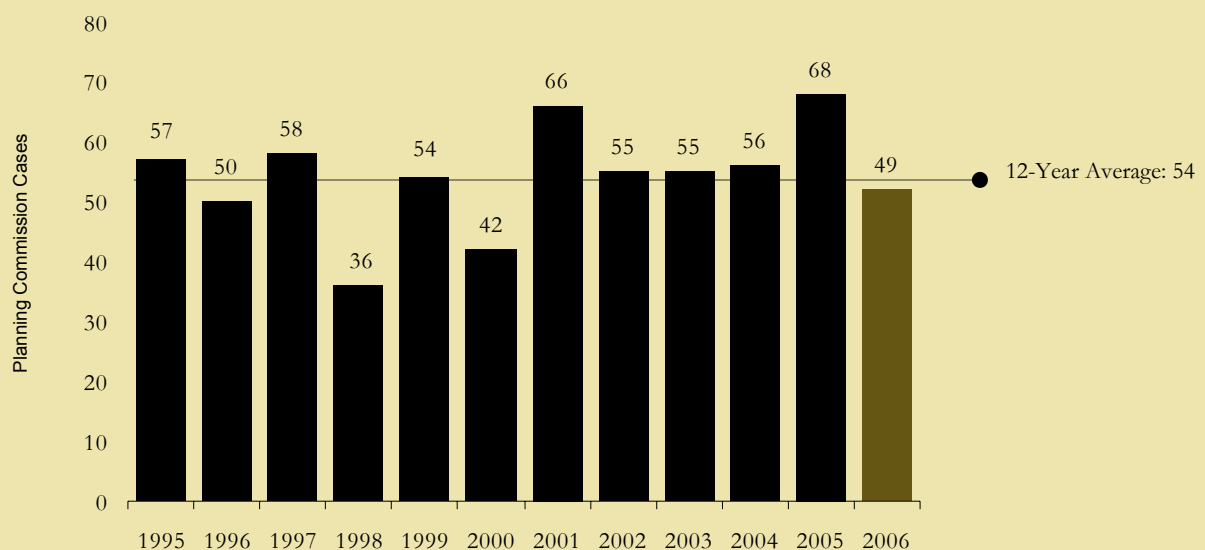
In 2006, the St. Louis County Planning Commission reviewed 49 applications. This is slightly lower than the 12-year average of 54 applications per year since 1995.

In 2006, subdivision plats, planned unit developments (PUDs), and common interest communities (CICs) accounted for 34.6% (17 applications) of the 49 applications heard by the Planning Commission.

There were 13 plats and subdivision applications reviewed in 2006, whereas, historically an average of seven-eight applications were reviewed annually from 1995-2005.

In 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed two applications for home-based businesses, consistent with the yearly average from 1995-2005.

**Total Planning Commission Applications  
1995-2006**



Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

Note: Planning Commission applications include all conditional-use permits, rezonings, plat/subdivision, land-use/water plans, ordinances, EAW, and others.

# Planning Commission Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

**Planning Commission**

## About Shoreland & Non-Shoreland Areas

Shoreland areas are defined in state law as that area within 1,000 feet of a lake or 300 feet of a river. Shoreland areas have some of the highest concentration of property values in the county as well as having some of the most challenging land-use and environmental issues.

These issues exist because of the high value people place on our lakes and rivers, the density of development that exists in these areas, and available land for development often has environmental constraints that encourage projects to be directed towards the better land.

Non-shoreland areas are lands away from lakes and rivers and are considered non-shoreland property. Development in these areas often presents different but equally significant land-use and environmental concerns. Those issues include: impact upon neighbors, legality and quality of road access, waste disposal, and noise and dust.

Development proposals tend to be on a larger scale due to the generally lower-priced land. These proposals may include gravel pits, manufacturing, storage facilities, salvage yards, kennels, churches, and community centers. Non-shoreland development also includes home based businesses that could result in a need for a conditional-use permit.

## Planning Commission Applications by Type

Total Number 1995-2006

Permit Type	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
												#	% of Total
Conditional-Use Permits (CUP)	36	38	40	27	43	29	41	36	27	33	38	26	53.1%
<i>Sales and Service</i>	9	9	10	10	9	10	5	3	2	6	9	2	4.1%
<i>Borrow Pit</i>	5	9	11	4	10	3	3	9	5	4	8	7	14.3%
<i>Resorts/ Campground/ B&amp;B</i>	7	5	3	8	0	3	8	4	6	6	5	2	4.0%
<i>Other</i>	4	4	3	0	8	1	11	10	1	5	1	3	6.2%
<i>Rural Industry</i>	6	4	6	4	12	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	0%
<i>Mini-Storage</i>	1	3	3	1	2	3	5	4	2	2	4	5	10.2%
<i>Home-Based Business</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	5	9	3	2	2	4.0%
<i>Planned Unit Development (PUD)</i>	4	3	2	0	2	1	1	0	2	7	5	4	8.1%
<i>Communication Towers</i>	0	1	2	0	0	4	3	1	0	0	3	1	2.0%
Plats/Subdivisions	2	3	4	3	5	3	11	6	17	15	17	13	26.5%
Rezoning	7	5	7	2	5	4	6	3	8	5	6	6	12.2%
Land-Use/Water Plans	0	0	0	2	0	2	5	3	2	2	1	1	2.0%
Ordinance	3	0	2	1	1	2	2	5	1	0	0	0	0.0%
Environmental Assessment Worksheet	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3	2	4.1%
Other	6	3	5	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	3	1	2.0%
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006. Note: Plat /subdivision are only the number of applications reviewed by the Planning Commission.

# Planning Commission Summary

Planning Commission

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Permit Summary

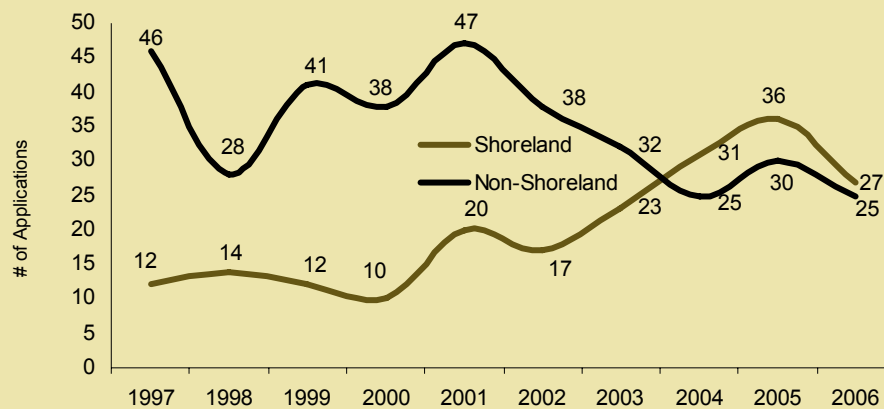
Land-Use Administration

## Shoreland Applications

In 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed 27 shoreland applications, representing 52% of the total of 52 applications.

In 2006, the Planning Commission reviewed a decreased number of applications related to shoreland compared to the previous two years.

## Shoreland vs. Non-Shoreland Applications 1997-2006



Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006





# Planning Commission Summary

Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

**Planning Commission**

## Plats & Subdivision: 2006

	Lake Name	Township	Lots	Recorded (County Board Approval)
<b>Preliminary Plats Approved</b>				
Camp North First Addition	Eagles Nest	62-14 Eagles Nest	5	March
Two Harbors Wilderness	King	54-12 Pequaywan	15	March
Towering Pines	Vermilion	63-16 Greenwood	10	May
Serenity Point	Vermilion	62-16 Greenwood	7	June
Spruce Lake Preserve	Spruce Lake	61-13 Unorganized	31	August
Arthur Lake Shores	Arthur	61-13 Unorganized	10	October
Blue Heron Retreat	Vermilion	62-15 Breitung	9	November
Hinden Acres	Shagawa	63-12 Morse	6	November
Markham Meadows	Little Markham	56-15 Colvin	8	November
East Shores of Pleasant Lake	Pleasant Lake	57-17 Fayal	5	December
<b>Plats Denied</b>				
No plats denied				
<b>Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) Approved</b>				
Hi-Banks Resort	Island	52-14 Gnesen	36	November
<b>Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) Denied</b>				
No Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) denied				
<b>Common Interest Community (CICs) Approved</b>				
Kabetogama Homesites CIC	Kabetogama	69-21 Kabetogama	8	April
Rocky Point Resort	Kabetogama	69-21 Kabetogama	8	July
Big Lake Wilderness Retreat	Big lake	65-13 Unorganized	24	October
<b>Common Interest Community (CICs) Denied</b>				
No CICs Denied				

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

# Planning Commission Summary

## Planning Commission

## Board of Adjustment (BOA)

## Permit Summary

## Land-Use Administration

### ■ Referrals to County Board

In 2006, the St. Louis County Board considered 15 items referred to it from the Planning Commission.

Rezoning activity remained the same in 2006, based on the Planning Commission's recommendations.

The Planning Commission makes recommendations to the County Board on re-zonings, subdivision plats, ordinance amendments and land-use plans. Recommended items included: four rezonings and ten subdivision plats.

There were no plat, CIC or rezoning denials in 2006.

Subdivision plat activity stayed consistent and the County Board approved ten subdivision plats, of which eight were on lakes.

## Planning Commission Referrals to County Board: 2006

					Planning Commission Approval	Board Action 2006
Land-Use Plans						
1.	N/A					
Rezonings						
2.	Clinton				March 2006	May 2006
3.	Cloquet River				August 2006	November 2006
4.	Duluth				September 2002	March 2006
5.	Solway				August 2005	April 2006
Plats		Lake Name	Township	Lots		
6.	Final Approval: Bobcat Ridge	Morcom	55-16 Ellsburg	7	September 2003	February 2006
7.	Final Approval: Brevator Estates		50-17 Brevator	4	September 2003	May 2006
8.	Final Approval: Camp North First Addition	Eagles Nest	62-14 Eagles Nest	5	March 2006	August 2006
9.	Final Approval: Echo Shores	Fenske	64-12 Unorganized	8	May 2005	May 2006
10.	Final Approval: Floodwood Preserve	Floodwood	54-21 Cedar Valley	12	November 2005	April 2006
11.	Final Approval: Luna Lake Retreat	Luna	60-21 French	10	September 2005	April 2006
12.	Final Approval: Sabroski Division		52-13 Normana	2	October 2005	June 2006
13.	Final Approval: Southwest Shores	White Iron	60-21 French	3	July 2004	May 2006
14.	Final Approval: Voyageur Shores	Kabetogama	69-21 Kabetogama	3	November 2005	August 2006
15.	Final Approval: Webers Woods	Vermilion	63-15 Unorganized	2	July 2005	June 2006

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006

# Land-Use Administration

## Land-Use Administration

Permit Summary

Board of Adjustment (BOA)

Planning Commission

## Permit Fees

St. Louis County Planning Department

Revenue Code	Land Use	2006 Fee (\$)
550102	Change in height, pitch or projection of a roof	100
550103	Change in use (structure)	100
550101	Single family dwelling less than 600 sq. ft.	100
550107	Single family dwelling greater than or equal to 600 sq. ft.	250
550108	Mobile home	100
550109	Dwelling addition	50
550111	Accessory building 100-800 sq. ft.	100
550105	Accessory building greater than or equal to 800 sq. ft.	150
550106	Accessory building additions	100
550120	Structure moving/storage	100
550121	Variance	500
	Variance Rehearing	150
550104	Deck	100
550123	Sauna	100
550125	Foundation (including slab)	100
550113	Commercial building	200
550114	Commercial building addition	200
550115	Commercial accessory building	100
550117	Conditional-use	500
	Conditional-use Rehearing	250
550119	Home occupation	100
	Administrative Subdivision	500
550127	Subdivision plat up to 1 government lot or 40 acre	1,000
	Subdivision Plat with 2-4 government lots or 160 acres	1,500
	Subdivision Plat with 5-16 government lots or 640 acres	2,000
	Subdivision Plat with more than 16 government lots or QQ	2,500
550128	Subdivision plat design waiver	100
550129	Rezoning ordinance map amendments	400
550130	Environmental assessment worksheet	1,000
	Alternative Urban Area Review	2,000
550131	Planned unit development	0
550132	Certificate of survey	250
550133	Site evaluation	100
550134	Zoning ordinance copy	10
550135	Land alteration permit	150
550136	Borrow pit permit	300
550137	Off-site sign	50
	On-site sign	50
550138	Performance standard permit	300
550139	Commercial billboard	150
	Wetland determination	0
	Wetland field delineation	0
	Wetland replacement plan review	0
550140	Multiple variance/Conditional-use (commercial)	800
	Multiple variance: Land-use/Health	0

Source: St. Louis County Planning Department, 2006